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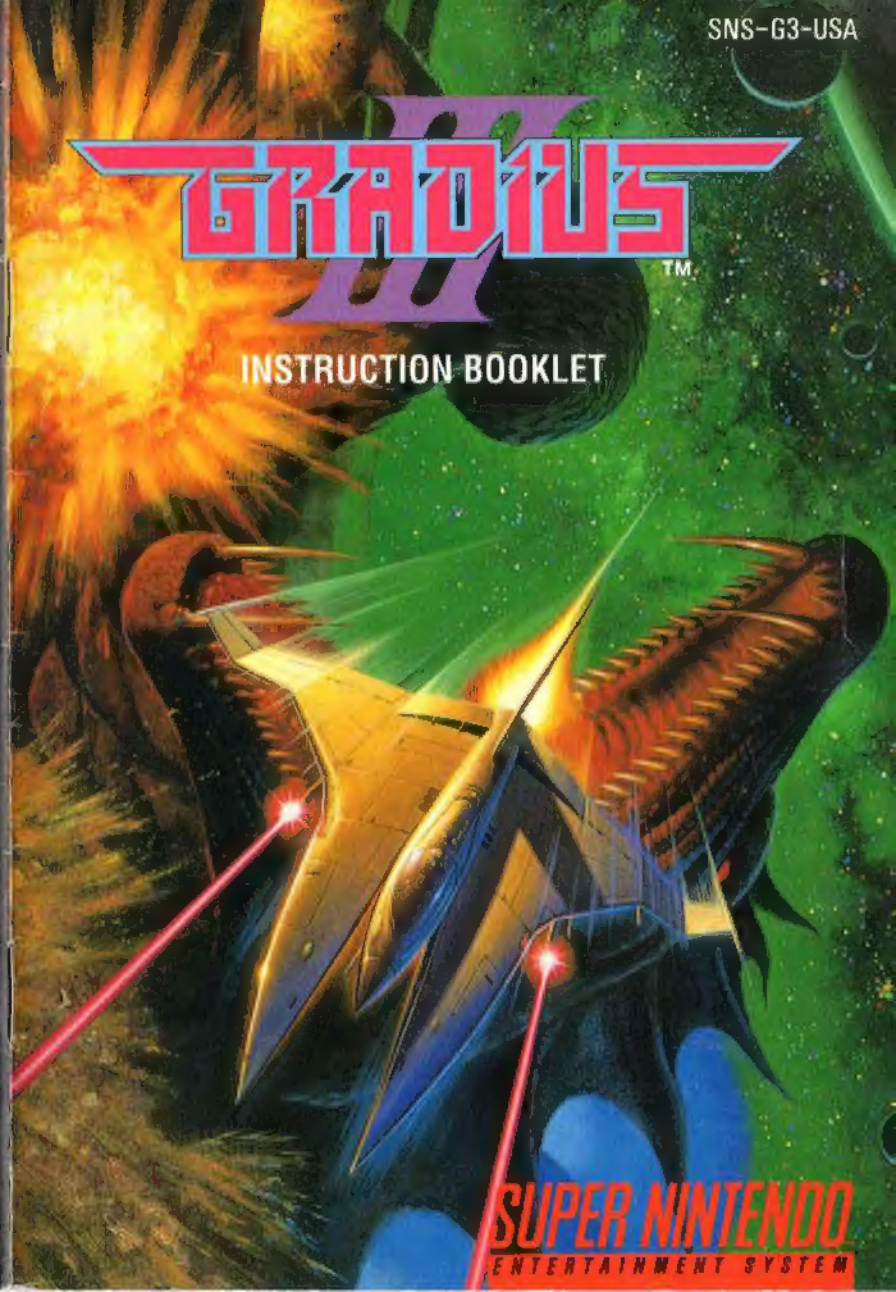
GRADIUS III™

INSTRUCTION BOOKLET



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CONGRATULATIONS!

You now own Gradius™ III - The Outbreak™ for the Super NES™, another hit in Konami's stellar series. We suggest that you read the following instructions thoroughly before launching your adventure.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION 4
HOW TO PLAY 5
THE CONTROLS 6
WEAPON SELECTION 8
THE BATTLESPHERE 9
HYPER POWER BOOSTING 9
TERROR ZONES 13
ENEMIES 16
ENEMY MAYORS 18

FROM WHENCE IT CAME

In the darkest quadrant of space there churns the vortex of Bad Vibes. Bacterion, it has been called, is a malignant mass that has spawned all that is wicked in the universe. Feeding on the suffering of the innocent, it moves like a germ throughout the Galaxy, manifesting itself in unspeakably hideous forms. In the past, Bacterion has only had the power to rear its ugly head on a few isolated occasions. That is, until now.

Being a good Gradian, your history class in primary school was the first place you heard of the ancient Heroic Missions to fight Bacterion. You even got a toy Warp Rattler for your fifth birthday. Those were the days when it was just a chapter in your history book.

History is important to the people of Gradius, as is all the higher pursuits of knowledge, art and music. Gradius has reached a renaissance. Your people are known throughout the universe as a good and peace loving nation. Who could have known that it would come down to this.

The ancient scholars prophesied that a day would come when the Evil Beast would be unleashed after eons of being kept at bay, inflicting a slow and painful death on the entire galaxy. That day has come.

After a heart wrenching journey through the Gradian Desert Lands, you have come to terms with your fate. It is your mission to save all that is good in the universe. You must defeat the diabolical entities that plague Gradius and the surrounding planets. Fare thee well, brave warrior.

HOW TO PLAY

The people of Gradius see you as their last hope for peace and harmony. They've tapped into the entire Federation Reserves to build your 100 zillion dollar starship, christened M.A.X., which stands for Modulated Artillery Exalter. Like its prototype the Warp Rattler, only a pilot of the highest caliber can make maximum use of its power resources.

Select your ensemble of weaponry and then launch headlong into enemy infested darkness. You will find that certain weapons are best suited to different conflicts that you will encounter. As Captain, you will use clever tactics in engaging the appropriate weapons to outblast the beasts.

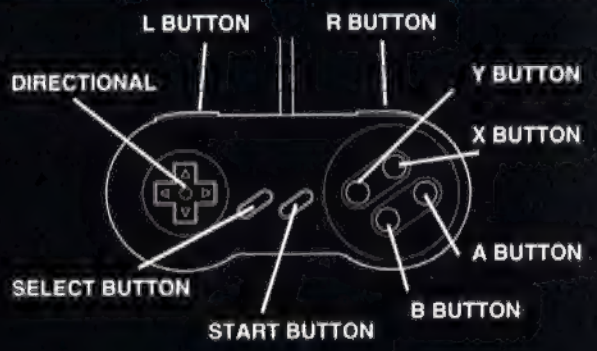
Defeat the nasty Mayors of each of ten treacherous Terror Zones by penetrating the very core of their beings. Once you conquer a mayor, you'll be able to access the secret bonus arena. This will be a good chance to revitalize your weaponry.

You start with a fleet of three M.A.X. ships to use one at a time. You can receive additional ships by reaching certain point totals. If the enemy brings your ship down, you will re-choose your arsenal before going on to the next ship.

When you start again, you will find yourself in the same battle area you were in just before you lost it. If the enemy brings down all your ships, the game will be over, but all is not lost.

You will have three more CREDITS that allow you to continue your game with a fleet of three ships each time. Again, if you choose to continue, you will return to the same battle area where you left off.

You can either fly solo, or take turns defending the galaxy with a partner. Compete for the high score for extra alien annihilating incentive. Be aggressive and speed right into your enemy's face to let him know you can't be intimidated. And most of all, never forget that you are a Gradian.



TAKING CONTROL

When you feel you are ready to take the plunge into the cosmos, press the Start Button and you will go to the Title Screen. Use the Directional to move the cursor to select 1 PLAYER, 2 PLAYER or OPTION. In the OPTION Mode you can adjust the level of difficulty (Game Level) to EASY, NORMAL or HARD. You can also design your Control Pad to suit your individual fighting style by assigning SHOT, MISSILE and POWER-UP to any button you choose: A, B, X, Y, R or L. Not only that, but Auto Mode also allows you to turn TURBO SHOT On or Off. TURBO SHOT makes your shooting faster and more furious. You can also turn the AUTOMATIC POWER-UP On or Off. AUTOMATIC POWER-UP activates your Hyper Power Weapons automatically when you capture a Red Power Pod (see pg.9). Otherwise, you can manually control your Hyper Power Weapons with your Power-up Button.

When you are teaming up with another star warrior in 2 PLAYER Mode, each player can equip his M.A.X. with his own choices for fighting controls and weapon supply; the choices don't have to be the same. In 2 PLAYER Mode, Player 2 chooses his arsenal after Player 1's first round. You also have the option of adjusting the sound to STEREO or MONO.

Make all of your choices with your Directional, then press the Start Button to return to the Title Screen. Next select 1 PLAYER or 2 PLAYER and press the Start Button again to go to the Weapon Select Screen.

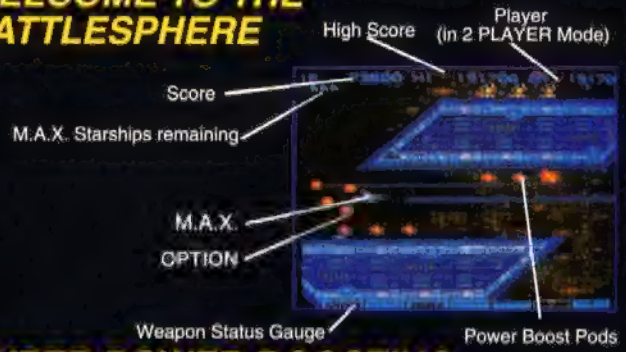
NOTE: If you bypass the OPTION Mode, starship engineering will automatically set the parameters as follows: NORMAL Game Level, SHOT AND MISSILE are assigned to the B Button, POWER-UP is assigned to the A Button, TURBO SHOT is On, AUTOMATIC POWER-UP is Off and the sound is in STEREO.

WEAPON SELECTION: THE ONSLAUGHT ENSEMBLE

Before you embark on your noble mission, you must choose your weapons. You can choose one of four pre-set arsenals (TYPE SELECT) or customize your own (EDIT MODE). If you want a pre-set arsenal, press the Directional Up or Down to make your selection, then press the A Button to lock it in, B Button to cancel. You must also choose one of two types of shields. Make your choice with the Directional, then lock in your decision with the A Button, B Button to cancel. When you are finished, press the Start Button.

If you want to build your own arsenal, press the Directional Right to get to the Edit Mode Screen. Use the Directional to select from four options in each category: MISSILE, DOUBLE, LASER, OPTION, ? (bonus), and ! (super bonus). Press the A Button to lock in each selection, B Button to cancel. When you're finished, press the Start Button and get ready for some ferocious fighting.

WELCOME TO THE BATTLESPHERE



HYPER POWER BOOSTING

Your M.A.X. starts out equipped only with an Xtron Cannon, but you can add the weapons from your arsenal throughout your mission. The Weapon Status Gauge at the bottom of the screen lights up which weapon in the arsenal is engaged. In order to boost the gauge to more powerful weapons you must capture the enemies' Red Power Pods. (Blue Pods activate All Destroy, which obliterates all enemies on the screen, turning them into anti-matter before they even know what hit them.) Each Red Pod captured boosts the gauge by one weapon. To activate the currently engaged weapon press your Power-up Button. You can utilize several weapons at once, but you can't use LASER and DOUBLE at the same time. LASER, DOUBLE, ? and ! can only be activated once. The OPTION weapon can be activated up to four times, but watch out because there's a crazed crustation out there who can snatch one or two of your OPTION weapons if you're not careful. Fortunately, you can regain a stolen OPTION by once again boosting your Weapon Status Gauge to OPTION and engaging it.

THE HIT LIST OF ROCK'EM SOCK'EM WEAPONS

EDIT MODE WEAPONS

SPEED UP

Increases your atmosphere ripping speed.

MISSILES

Standard Drops missiles that skim across the ground.

Hawk Wind Shoots missiles upward if you're in the top half of the screen or downward if you're in the bottom half.

2-Way Back Shoots down and backward simultaneously.

Small Spread Compact but still knocks out creeps on contact.

DOUBLE

Vertical Takes care of anything you've got hanging over your head with a straight up cannon.

Standard Adds another cannon at a 45° angle upward.

Tail Gun Nail those bothersome tailgaters with a rear cannon.

Back Adds a back 45° angled upward zinger.

LASER

Twin Double the destruction, double the fun.

Ripple Unleash rings of destruction that knock out enemies who are attacking from scattered positions.

Energy Tap the Shot Button for small bursts or hold it down to release bigger bursts.

Cyclone The longer you hold down the Shot Button, the longer the deadly laser beam gets.

OPTION

Standard You can tack on up to four clone starships that will shadow your every move.

Snake Same as the Standard, but with slithering movement.

Formation Create a precision flying team, with up to two OPTIONS above and two OPTIONS below.

Rotater Rock 'n' roll with a shadow ship that revolves around your M.A.X.

? (BONUS)

Shield Provides two shields in front for two-fisted defense.

Force Field Wraps you in a steely security blanket when things get too scary.

Rolling Shield A rotating enemy blockade that'll put you on a roll.

Reduce Less of you is more when you shrink down to avoid enemy attack.

! (SUPER BONUS)

Speed Down When you have no need for speed, you can just slow down a bit.

Remain Option Enables you to use your remaining M.A.X. Starships as OPTIONS (up to four).

Full Barrier Bring your barriers and shields back up to full size after they've been shrunken by enemy attack.

Mega Crush Blows away all enemies and bullets on the screen. Not exactly a love tap.

TYPE SELECT WEAPONS

Same weapons as in EDIT MODE except there are no ? or ! weapons, and the following weapons replace others:

2-Way Missile Shoots up and down simultaneously.

Spread Bomb Drops to the ground and blows enemies and obstructions to kingdom come.

Photon Torpedo Drops down and runs along the ground picking off small but oh so annoying enemies.

Standard Laser Hold down the shot button to give a powerful zap to pesky passers-by.

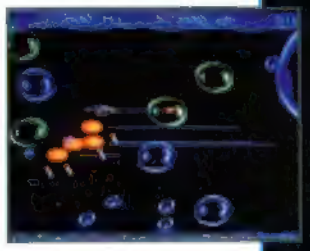
THE TERROR ZONES: A CARNIVAL OF CARNAGE

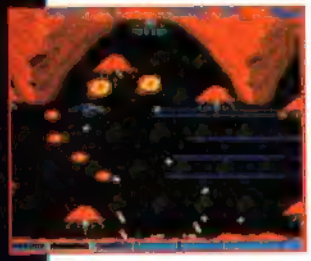
The Dunes of Doom

Once the galaxy's wondrous hanging gardens, now infested with evil creatures that failed to water the plants, transforming them into a hanging desert.

The Carbonation Zone

You've got big bubbles, big troubles, in an atmosphere filled with Toxic Bubbles and deadly adversaries.





Lava Them and Leave Them Zone

Don't be deceived by innocent looking space weeds. Camouflaged enemy battle stations tend to drop in unannounced. Make it past them and tempers will really flare up. We're talking molten nightmare!

Pop Rock Monolith Zone

Vandals have desecrated one of the galaxy's most sacred relics, the Great Stone Monoliths of prehistoric Easter Island. Now they are nothing more than Death Ring missile launchers.

Light My Fire Zone

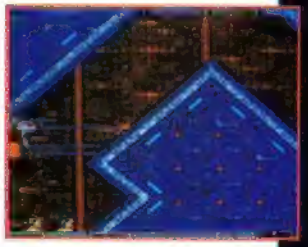
You'll really be under the broiler as you make your way through lashing flame tunnels and past satellite-sized scorpions.

Bacterion's Garden

This is not the place to stop and smell the roses. These poisonous posies will try to turn you into life-sized plant food!

The Greased Lightning Round

You'll be catapulted through a labyrinth of electronic circuitry which houses the Evil One's data bank control.

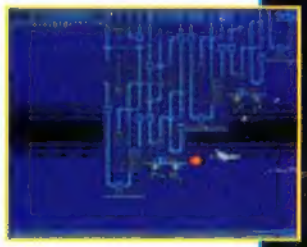


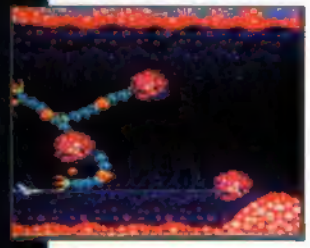
Mayors on Parade

Don't expect any live TV coverage for this grotesque gallery of gargantuan Grand Marshalls. Stick to your guns and you'll be the one to rain on the parade.

The Gauntlet

No benevolent mortal being has made it past this horrific monstrosity yet. The brave ones who have tried have either returned as complete basket cases or have never been heard from again.





Bacterion's Lair

Here you will face your ultimate nemesis. You must destroy the cold black heart of Bacterion himself. If you do, you're sure to receive a hero's welcome home. If you don't, we can all just kiss life as we know it good-bye.

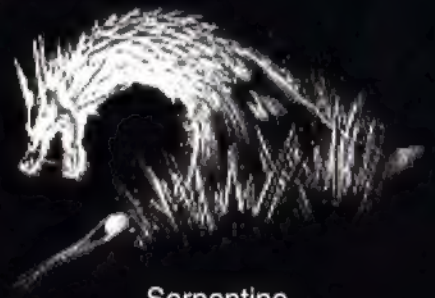
THE ENEMY HALL OF BLAME

Cirkill

Toxic Bubbles

Cankerzore

Zoink



Serpentine

Link

Molar

Yang

Bubble Mite

Quad

Gaggle

Monolith

Voss

Gladys

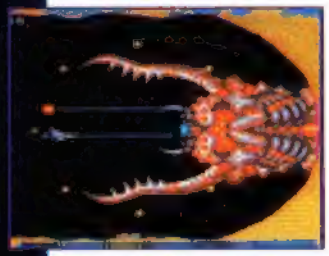
Pupitron

Vector

Spore

Bazooka Head

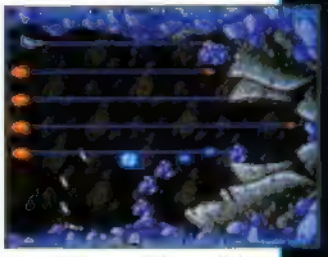
MAYORS WHO WOULD NEVER WIN A POPULARITY CONTEST



Earwig Scorpion

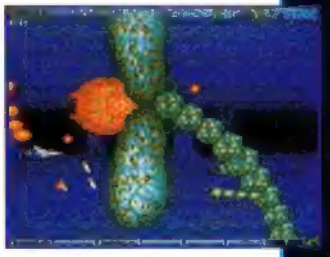
Bubble Brain

QB2B

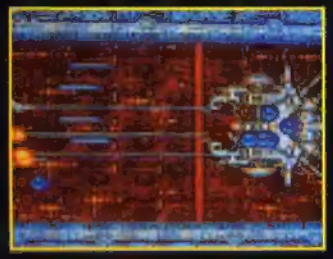


Mega Monolith

Two-Headed Scorch Serpent



Bulbous



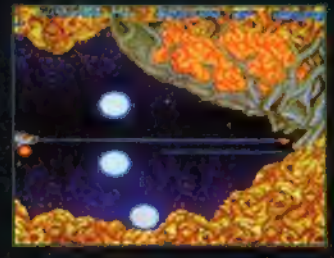
Beacon

Monarch

Ice Ice

Grim

Shadow Dancer



BACTERION